

the dwarves and intellectuals and ugly
ducklings -- Mother Goose's progeny.

He feels the world is his, and here's a
secret: that is why it is. He needed
no Dale Carnegie to teach him self-esteem
(though chicks keep warning he'll outreach himself).

Siegfried, Siegfried, you've been truly blessed
by sun and vitamins and breeding of
the best. No artist of the good and blonde
and true could ever quite disparage you.

captain midnight cowboy sister carrie

shit or shitless, as the case may be,
i'm oh so scared of ending up a derelict.
like ratso -- coughing, puking, never
getting laid, shivering, falling down

the stairs, then not quite making it to
florida, a whole new start as rico.
RICO, no more ratso bullshit, enrico
salvatore rizzo, dreams dreams,

joe buck as his lever, 'cause you gotta
have a little leverage, a little something
someone needs, like talent, property,
or a big stiff texas longhorn dick,

otherwise you'll get evicted every time
you fart, and what sawbones' gonna take
time out from golf to fix your leg, what dolly's
gonna be seen with you, you pitiful pariah ...

the same with dreiser's hurstwood -- he loses his
leverage, in his case a white-collar job,
and after that it's the old quicksand trick.
with vicious whirlpools, like you can't get a

decent job because your clothes are wrinkled, but
you can't afford to have your pants pressed
because you're out of a job, soon you
notice your sweetheart losing interest, the bitch

you did it all for in the first place, so
you try to knock over a liquor store, but you
get shot in the balls and three-to-thirty
years besides, and meanwhile she is laying

all the mod squad who can buy her supergrass
and take her sailing off balboa,

and you get the lead in the cellblock summer play:
dryden's all for love: or a world well lost ...

now i didn't grow up hungry and i've always had
a lever, but there've been lean times,
no car. no television set. no record player,
no beer money, no extra cash for philandering,

and i, who weigh two hundred thirty pounds,
was once down to a hundred seventy, no
money for doctors. for dentists, for books
or stamps or movies or parties or a lawyer.

always knew. though, it was temporary,
always had a lever up my sleeve, but what
if they wouldn't let me teach anymore, and i
don't make any money writing. and everyone

agrees i'm not much good at anything else (if joe buck
couldn't make it as a stud. that leaves me out)
and strange girls are afraid of my long hair and
big nose, and i get surly when i get depressed ...

on the way to westwood to the flick, bobbie says
"can we be rich someday," and i say, "sure,"
and she says. "can we go springtime in paris.
moonlight in vermont. autumn in new york ..."

and i say. "sure," but how will i make any money
when i can't sit still for anything i can't write
in a sitting. and i won't do anything specifically
for money anyway. the paper doesn't even pay for my reviews.

and money. i guess, does matter. she says it doesn't
but she's beautiful and should be seen by men
around the world (and so should my wife who is beautiful
and young and never gets out except to the laundry ...)

after the show. we go to santa monica
for fish and chips. but i'm caught short and have
to borrow a couple of bucks from her. we drive
the coast to malibu and think about a motel.

but that would truly be an extravagance.
the forty miles back we wonder whether i
can get her on the payroll as student assistant.
this morning. at home, i find the rent-check has bounced.

envoi

i'm almost thirty and my lawyer says it's a critical
age for poets and that i should see a shrink
but my head is straight since bobbie, i'll just
go easy on the booze, and stay away from parabolic